

The NACC National Rally 2018

Dave Beare

Once again the South Staffs. Section did a brilliant job of organising the NACC National Rally at Wolverhampton Rugby Club which really is the ideal venue for such an event. It has a vast grassy camping area shaded by trees alongside three rugby pitches and the recently-renovated clubhouse has new loos and showers accessible 24 hours. The clubhouse offered full-English breakfasts on Saturday and Sunday, a curry on Friday evening and a three-course roast pork dinner (each table had it's own joint to carve!) finishing with cheese & biscuits and coffee on Saturday evening, all produced by Stafan. It was good to have as our guest Jim Reynolds, who regaled us with stories of his journalistic career and past adventures and/or misadventures on motorcycles. The bar was open both evenings courtesy of Andy, the weather was superb and we all had a very, very good weekend, what more could we ask for?

Friday we were 31 camping and Saturday 34 (a record?); Friday evening 34 members & family enjoyed the curry and Saturday evening 50 of us filled the clubhouse for the excellent dinner, with noisy balloons and a Tombola, which raised £102 for the Midlands Air Ambulance.

On Saturday there was a choice of two runs. The longer one of 46 miles for scooters & mopeds was planned by Bob Rushton and road tested by Neil Howells which had 26 sign on. Bob (R) led with Neil acting as Lanterne Rouge, except they had to swap temporarily at the start as Bob's New Hudson got a case of the jitters, but after watching everybody set off it was quite happy once a new plug had been found and Bob caught everybody up very quickly. Chris Harper's Berini suffered a lack of acceleration on reaching Brewood but managed to make his way back to base under his own steam albeit via a scenic route which included a stop at the Harley Davidson dealer in Wolverhampton, but he resisted the temptation to trade it in! Phill suffered an ignition failure with his Puch Maxi on the way back from Pattingham and travelled back to base camp courtesy of Di's rescue service.

Saturday's long run was to Norbury Junction on the Shropshire Union Canal via many scenic back-roads, it's an interesting stop with a café and much narrow-boat activity, including the arrival and mooring up of a loaded cargo-carrier, something seldom seen nowadays but for which the canals were built in the first place.

The shorter Saturday run (about 24 miles) for cyclemotors and low-powered machines was planned and led by Ian Harris, it had 9 riders. All set off half an hour after the longer run but a few minutes later Ian was back on site pushing his Bernardi which had decided not to co-operate, so Ian handed over his leader's waistcoat to John Burgess and loaded his bike up to go back home to swap for his trusty Honda. However he then had a problem with bike number two and decided to phone for a taxi to take him back home so that he could pick up car and trailer to rescue that one as well! There were no other problems and apparently a vote was taken at Patshull fishing lake as to whether to stay there longer or ride on to Cosford as per the route. Staying-put won and so a leisurely time was had with another cup of tea before setting off for the fete at Pattingham Village Fête where both runs met up.

There were no less than sixteen Hondas in action on Saturday's run; Ray's Vale of Glamorgan group arrived as Team Honda Sky with six machines, there were several C90 step-thru's, a NanFang SS50 clone, Nick brought his Mad Max-style Honda Zoomer and there was a Sym Symba Chinese C90 clone. It seems as we get older the prospect of roadside repairs loses its appeal and reliability- arriving at your destination without having to clean a plug or deal with other malfunctions- is now more sought after!

Sunday's run was our traditional rural meander to the very active Halfpenny Green airfield, the route was led by Neil with 31 participants including Jim Reynolds, who was with us for the weekend. They do great bacon butties in the café, from where we watched an inexperienced pilot trying to take off with an autogyro- he tilted the main rotor so steeply the only thing that nearly took off was his tailplane!

The marquee bike storage was kindly organised and transported to and fro by Neil and Di, thanks to them and their helpers for erecting and dismantling.

Thanks go to Ann, Pat, Bob & Marg for running the Saturday evening raffle, to Liz, Anne & Val for washing up duties and most of all thanks to Bob & Liz for organising such a superb weekend. Next year's National at Wolverhampton Rugby Club is already booked for 5th-7th July 2019- see you there.....

Photos courtesy of John Burgess, Nick Devonport & Dave Beare